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Your ref.

Our ref.
LPT0803/AJM

Please reply to Birmingham
14 February 2006

Dear Sirs

International Patent Application No. PCT/GB2005/001433
In the name of KAB Seating Limited

Reference is made to the notification of transmittal of the International Search Report and the Written Opinion of the International Searching Authority dated 16 August 2005. International Preliminary Examination is hereby requested. Please find enclosed our cheque and voucher for €1659 to cover the Handling and International Preliminary Examination Fees, completed Form PCT/IPEA/401 plus an amended claim set to replace the set at present on file for your kind attention.

New independent claim 1 is to a method of manufacture of a suspension system. Basis for this claim can be found on pages 2, 7 and 8 of the specification. Page 2 details the broad aim of the invention, which is to provide manufacturing and replacement flexibility through the use of interchangeable components. Pages 7 and 8 detail how the first part (1) can be releasably attached to one of two interchangeable top portions (9) and one of two interchangeable second parts (10 or 14). It is clear from pages 7 and 8 that the first option requires the particular top portion (9) and spring (10) of Figure 2 whereas the second option necessitates the use of the top portion (9) and spring (14) of Figure 3.

It is submitted that the interchangeability aspect of new claim 1 gives rise to novelty and inventive step over D1 and D2, which are cited against original claim 1 of the present application in point 3 of the Written Opinion. Neither D1 nor D2 disclose or suggest a method of manufacture of such a modular system that allows for interchangeable components. The fact that the components of the method of claim 1 can be releasably connected and are interchangeable (with regard to the top portion and the second part) provides greater flexibility in the manufacture of the system and in the replacement of its parts than either of the systems of D1 or D2.

New dependent method claims 2 to 18 further define the system to be manufactured, in the same way that original claims 1 to 18 did. Accordingly, the basis for these claims can be found on pages 2 to 5 of the specification.

New independent claim 19 relates to a kit for a suspension system. Basis for this claim can also be found on pages 7 and 8 of the description, which highlight the interchangeability of the top

portion and the second part. This enables the system to be sold in kit form offering alternative top portions and second parts. It is submitted that neither D1 nor D2 disclose or suggest such a kit with interchangeable, releasable components. Such a modular kit provides additional flexibility to the customer because the interchangeable components can be swapped easily, as and when required to suit particular needs.

Dependent claims 19 to 36 further define the system of the kit in the same way as original claims 2 to 18. Therefore, pages 2 to 5 of the specification provide the basis for these new claims.

New independent claim 37 to a suspension system incorporates the features of original claims 1 to 5, 12 and 16. It is submitted that this new claim is novel and inventive over D1 and D2 because it requires that the top portion can receive the free end of the or each first arm along a lower surface of the top portion. This feature is not present in either D1 or D2. Figure 1 of D1 shows a channel (13) housing the free end (15) of arm (11), however, new claim 37 requires the free ends of the arms to move over a lower surface of the top portion. This is not the case in D1 where the channel (13) housing the free end (15) of arm (11) is clearly a separate piece attached to the top portion to hold the free end (15) of arm (11) in place rather than being part of a one-piece top portion that can receive a free end of an arm as with the present invention. New claim 37 is also novel and inventive over D2 because the device of that document does not contain any movable free ends of its arms (14, 15).

New dependent claims 38 to 48 incorporate the features of original claims 6 to 11, 13 to 15, 17 and 18 respectively. It is submitted that these claims are also novel and inventive in view of their dependency on new claim 37.

As a result of the claim amendments it is submitted that the objections in points 4 and 5 of the Written Opinion regarding the dependent claims are now moot.

The objections regarding items VII and VIII are noted and will be addressed during the National Phase of this application.

We look forward to receiving the Written Opinion of the International Preliminary Examining Authority in the near future.

Yours faithfully,

Ms. Lucy P. Trueman
Professional Representative

Enc.

TBK